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A SERIOUS ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND.

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A SERIOUS ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND, ON THE SUBJECT OF A REFORM, AND THE *Neceſſity of Zeal and Unanimity in Defence of their Country.*

By JAMES JOHNSON, Eſq.

SECOND EDITION.

"We are not loſt, if we continue firm."

Purſuits of Literature.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

W. Smith

A

SERIOUS ADDRESS, &c.

A Friend to my country,* a friend to ſocial order, and to our preſent civil and eccleſiaſtical polity, I cannot contemplate on the various events, which are now paſſing on the continent of Europe, particularly on that part of it, which is under the immediate controul of France, without feeling the moſt ſenſible pain. The great, the wonderful ſucceſs, which has attended on her arms, and which conſequently

* "I have loved my country from my earlieſt years, from a conviction of the excellence of the conſtitution, and of that balanced liberty, it was formed to maintain."

Purſuits of Literature.

has ſpread all her mad and incoherent principles over the whole face of Europe, muſt have excited ſimilar ſenſation in the breaſt of every true Engliſhman, at viewing in anticipation, in what manner this ſucceſs will ultimately affect Great Britain.

We muſt be all ſenſible, with what artful cunning and ſingular induſtry, the principles of Liberty and Equality were drawn up, circulated, and maintained in every part of France, and in every other ſtate, open to admit them, in order to ſecure partiſans to their cauſe. Such new and faſcinating doctrines, calculated to attract, and, by its power of attraction, to miſlead the lower orders of the people, could not, in the natural courſe of their operation, but meet with many zealous advocates. In a large and populous ſtate, there always exiſt men, and men not a few in number, who, diſcontented with their preſent condition, whatever that condition might be, and ambitious of raiſing themſelves to an elevated point of diſtinction, are prepared to ſeize every favourable opportunity to alter that condition, and to lift themſelves into notice. No moment more deſirable could preſent itſelf, than when thoſe revo-

revolutionary principles were firſt promulgated. It let looſe upon ſociety the greater part of its members; all the diſcontented, all the violent, and all the ambitious. Is it ſtrange, then, that the French cauſe ſhould have received ſo many ſanguinary leaders, and been attended by ſuch unparalleled ſucceſs?

Intimately concerned as the people of this country are, from their local ſituation, in regard to whatever paſſes in France, and the line of conduct purſued by the government thereof, it required no depth of political knowledge, long ago to foreſee, that the French revolution would, in its conſequences, greatly affect the intereſts and the eſtabliſhments of this kingdom: and, therefore, it undoubtedly became the wiſdom of government, narrowly to watch the progreſs of it. This duty, we have every reaſon to believe, was diſcharged moſt faithfully. We have every reaſon to believe alſo, for indeed it is, and has been repeatedly admitted by the French themſelves, and of which, were it not ſo, we have undeniable proof from the evidence * and papers of Lord

* Lately delivered in the Houſe of Lords in the courſe of debate.

Auckland, that the war was entered into, not intemperately and raſhly, not from any premeditation or deſire, on the part of our Government, which, on the contrary, exerted itſelf to avert the threatened calamity, in a manner, very laudable in my opinion, though it has been cenſured for having carried its pacific wiſhes farther, than the dignity of the ſtate demanded; but was entered into by the unjuſt aggreſſion, by the inſatiable ambition, by the artful projects of France herſelf; who, rejecting with lofty diſdain all advances to negotiation, reſolved to make war *politically*, in order to conſolidate and eſtabliſh her favourite republic.

The war, therefore, certainly was, on our part, inevitable,* and ſo far juſt and neceſſary; and though ſucceſs has not always crowned our efforts in the conduct of it upon land, yet upon our natural element, the ocean, the glory of the Britiſh arms never ſhone, I will not ſay with

* "The moſt ardent wiſh of my heart is *a ſecure peace*, after a war, for ever to be deplored, bloody, fatal, and expenſive beyond all example; but which I always believed, and ſtill believe, to have been *inevitable*."

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ſuperior,

ſuperior, but with equal ſplendour and brilliancy.

Still, with all this, our naval ſucceſs, conſidered it ſhould be, that the war cannot be ſupported without an enormous expence. The national debt, already incurred, is felt by the public to be moſt oppreſſive. The weight of taxes, at preſent impoſed, cramps the induſtry, and bends the ſpirit of the nation. Great and uncommon exertion, it is admitted on all ſides, is ſtill neceſſary. The object at ſtake is important: no leſs than our exiſtence, as an indépendant nation. Whilſt the ſpirit, which fills the boſom of our enemy, diſplays itſelf, on every poſſible occaſion, in acts of the moſt inveterate hatred. The times, therefore, it may be truly ſaid, are ſerious and critical; and require, in the conduct of our government, the utmoſt caution, and the moſt temperate firmneſs.

But, in addition to the many important affairs, which already engage the attention of Miniſtry, a great deſire has lately been manifeſted to bring forwards, for parliamentary diſcuſſion, the ſubject of a *radical reform*, as the only preſervative of the ſtate. When the people were lately called upon to raiſe the ſupplies

for the ſupport of the war, ſupplies, it is not to be denied, very great, but, at the ſame time, indiſpenſable, and of the war, which a great majority of the people had already declared, by the voice of their repreſentatives, to be juſt and neceſſary, every impediment was thrown in the way, apparently with the view of embarraſſing miniſters, and, in the moment of their embarraſſment, to ſupplant them. A *radical reform* was called for. A *radical reform* was declared neceſſary to be immediately brought forward to prop the falling ſtate.

"In a conſtitution, ſo very complicated as that of England, it muſt neceſſarily ſuffer alterations from time."* A reform, therefore, undoubtedly is much to be deſired, to repair the dilapidations, which the hand of time has made. But the reform, which every good man, and honeſt patriot, would recommend at the preſent moment, is of a moral, as well as of a political nature.

With reſpect to a reform of Government, he would wiſh to expreſs no deſire of *change* in the preſent eſtabliſhed conſtitution of this Coun-

* Goldſmith's Hiſtory of England.—George the firſt.

try,

try, but only a *correction of abuſes*, exiſting in the ſeveral departments thereof.

Much pains have been taken, I am ſorry to ſay it, by people, who call themſelves friends of Government, to blend and confound the meaning of *reformer* and *revolutioniſt*. Yet ſurely the import of theſe two words is widely different. A *correction of abuſes*, certainly, does not imply a *total change and overthrow* of the conſtitution. A man may be an advocate for the former, and yet avow hoſtility to the latter, without forfeiting his claim to conſiſtency. I would wiſh to ſee the power of the ſtate renovated by undergoing a *reform*, but not the ſmalleſt *change* whatever take place in our political eſtabliſhment.

In the preſent embarraſſed ſtate of our finances, under the preſent heavy load of taxes, tending almoſt to inſpire deſpondency, and to unnerve the arm of induſtry amidſt the middle ranks of life, the neceſſity muſt appear of a general retrenchment, as well in the ſeveral departments of Adminiſtration, as in private expenditure. Let patent places, ſuperfluous offices, and ſinecures be annihilated. Let the long liſt of gentlemen penſioners be reviſed and amended; and

none allowed to receive an annual ſalary from the ſtate, who has not a claim on its gratitude, as the reward, either of ſome uſeful diſcovery, or of ſome national ſervice. It would afford me no ſmall pleaſure alſo to ſee, under our preſent pecuniary difficulties, Miniſtry themſelves, who annually receive large ſums, to which I do not mean to affirm, that they are not juſtly entitled, as a compenſation for their ſervices to the ſtate; men, who, like the Duke of Portland, poſſeſs immenſe private property, more than ſufficient to ſupport their domeſtic eſtabliſhments with becoming dignity, come forward, and make, in the true ſpirit of patriotiſm, a voluntary ſurrender of all their official emoluments to the national ſervice. Let them ſtand forth in this generous and diſintereſted manner, and ſerve the nation without fee or reward. Such noble conduct, ſuch gratuitous ſervice, would ſpeak a language more forcible, and raiſe the public ſpirit more ſenſibly, in ſupport of the war, than all the political pamphlets, and all the declamatory ſpeeches, which have iſſued from the preſs for that purpoſe, during the courſe of the laſt five years.

And as the preſent war is continued, avowedly

edly for the protection of property, let men of fortune advance foremoſt in the liſt, and ſacrifice, voluntarily and cheerfully, on the altar of their country a part thereof, to enſure the preſervation of the remainder.

By purſuing ſuch a line of conduct as this, which I have chalked out, the ſpirit of diſcontent; and diſaffection, becoming now, it is to be lamented, ſo general, will ſubſide. It will convince the people, of what at preſent they deny, that the rich are really deſirous of bearing their ſhare of the public burden. It will convince the enemy, that we are in earneſt, that we are actuated by the pureſt love of our Country, and will not ſhrink from diſcharging the incumbent duties to it, when the national welfare demands it of us. It will tend to communicate an emulous ſpirit of Patriotiſm to all ranks and degrees in life, and will prompt, even the inferior members of the ſtate, to make the war a common cauſe.

A reform upon ſo ſmall a ſcale as this, a reform of abuſes only, in the various offices of Adminiſtration, and a reformed line of conduct in the great and affluent, may and ſhould be effected inſtantly, without a moment's delay; and

and will be attended by the moſt beneficial conſequences.

But with regard to the propriety of an *immediate parliamentary reform*, which has lately been ſo much the ſubject of converſation, I cannot ſay, that I conſider the public mind, at this moment, ſufficiently tranquil, to enter upon the diſcuſſion of it. A time of war, and of ſuch a war as the preſent, which threatens to involve in its conſequences the exiſtence of this nation, is a very unfit period to agitate a queſtion of ſuch moment. And very cenſureable, in my opinion, is the advice of thoſe, who recommend, that a general and radical reform in every department of the ſtate ſhould be inſtantly and immediately adopted.

Sudden and great changes are dangerous, as well to the body politic, as to the body natural. A reform of ſuch an extent, comprehending a variety of diſtinct, ſeparate, and important ſubjects, ſhould be effected gradually, ſtep by ſtep; ſhould be effected, not haſtily and raſhly, but coolly and deliberately, and with the moſt circumſpect caution: leſt the factious ſhould endeavour to excite, and take advantage of popular commotion, and plunge the nation unex-

unexpectedly into all the horrors of a revolution. For moſt juſtly has it been obſerved, that "no factions ever proceeded to attempt a *revolution* in any country, but firſt under the pretence, and through the medium of a *reform*."*

But whenever the happy and proper moment ſhall arrive of reforming parliament, I would wiſh to ſee, what are called the cloſe boroughs, laid open, and the right of election committed to all their inhabitants, under certain regulations. I would wiſh to ſee the number of repreſentatives proportioned to the population of each borough, and the number of county members increaſed; becauſe from the wide extent of a county, and the numerous body of its electors, there is leſs danger of corruption and undue influence.

Much has been ſaid, and much will be ſaid, whenever the queſtion is ſeriouſly debated, in favour of annual parliaments.† But ſurely it cannot

* Purſuits of Literature.

† "Annual parliaments was our ancient conſtitution."

"Frequent parliaments are coeval with the conſtitution. In the reign of Edward III. it was enacted, that parliaments ſhould be

cannot be denied, that one great and incontrovertible objection againſt this meaſure is, that it will be productive of great inconvenience to the ſtate, and prove the ſource of conſtant diviſions and animoſities among the electors. The old practice of returning a new parliament at the expiration of every three years, agreeably to the Triennial act, made in the reign of King William, "in the midſt of his difficulties," ſeems to be the happy medium, deſirable to be adopted between the two extremes. And the infringement of this practice, by paſſing an act prolonging their duration to ſeven years, unqueſtionably was, in the parliament of George I. a flagrant infringement of the firſt principles of juſtice, and the conſtitution;* and

be holden every year once, and oftener, if need be. This muſt be underſtood of new parliaments; for prorogations and long adjournments were not then known."—*Belſham's Memoirs of the Kings of Great Britain*, vol. i. p. 124, 126. *Speech of Sir Robert Raymond, afterwards Lord Raymond, and Chief Juſtice of England.*

* "The members of this aſſembly were choſen under the Triennial act. Our truſt is, therefore, a Triennial truſt, and if we extend it beyond the ſtrict legal duration, we ceaſe from that inſtant to be the truſtees of the people, and are our own electors.

From

and a violent aſſumption of power, by no means delegated to them by the people. "If it was right, ſays Goldſmith,* to extend their duration to ſeven years, they might alſo perpetuate their authority; and thus cut off even the ſhadow of nomination."

The right of voting alſo will require regulation. Reſpect ought to be paid to property, in

From that inſtant, we act by an unwarrantable aſſumption of power, and take upon us to create a new conſtitution."

Belſham's Mem. vol. i. p. 121. *Speech of Mr. Shippen.*

"In my opinion, with great ſubmiſſion I ſpeak it, King, Lords, and Commons can no more continue a parliament beyond its natural duration, than they can make a parliament."

Belſham's Mem. vol. i. p. 127. *Speech of Sir R. Raymond.*

* Hiſtory of England, George I.

"A long parliament will encourage every ſpecies of corruption in every claſs of the community. The value of a ſeat will bear a determinate proportion to the legal duration of parliaments, and the purchaſe will riſe accordingly. A long parliament will both enhance the temptations, and multiply the opportunities of a vicious miniſtry, to undermine the integrity and independency of parliaments, far beyond what could occur, if they were ſhort and frequent. The reaſons, urged for prolonging the duration of this parliament to ſeven years, will probably be as ſtrong, and, by perſeverance in the ſame impolitic conduct, might be made much ſtronger before the end of that term, for continuing and ever perpetuating their legiſlative power.

Belſham's Mem. vol. i. p. 118. *Speech of the Earl of Nottingham.*

ſuch

ſuch a manner as to make a ſmall portion of it the baſis of the right.—But on a ſubject ſo intereſting to every man in this kingdom, there muſt of neceſſity ariſe various, and perhaps, contradictory opinions: and it will require the collected wiſdom of the whole nation juſtly and prudently to ſettle and determine it.

An attentive obſerver may, at the preſent moment, perceive in this kingdom the diſcordant ſentiments of three parties: diſtinguiſhable by the denomination of the Court Party, which rejects without diſtinction all reform; of the Moderate Party, a party ſincerely attached to the conſtitution, as at preſent eſtabliſhed, but extremely deſirous of a reform, meaning thereby a correction of abuſes in every department of the ſtate, entertaining at the ſame time various opinions, reſpecting the moſt proper mode and period of effecting it; and of the Republican Party; for that ſuch a party did exiſt in the heart of this kingdom, was proved, at the late ſtate trials, to the conviction of every impartial mind; and we are now occaſional witneſſes of its ſtruggles to diſengage itſelf from the fetters, by which the wiſdom of parliament has thought proper to bind it.

The

The firſt party includes every man, who is dependant on, or connected with the preſent Adminiſtration. The ſecond contains the great body of the people. The laſt is compoſed of but few members; but among thoſe few, may be named ſome men of ſhining talents. However, this party is not, at the preſent moment, ſo formidable from its activity, as it was three or four years ago.

The court party, having all civil and military power veſted in its hands, muſt conſequently poſſeſs great ſtrength and influence: and, being dependent on, or connected with the preſent Adminiſtration, has an intereſt in continuing the exiſting abuſes. Is it at all ſtrange, therefore, that it ſhould reject indiſcriminately all reform; that it ſhould endeavour to confound the *reformer* and the *innovator*; and ſhould roundly aſſert, that a *reformation* will as naturally produce a *revolution*, as the effect will follow the cauſe?

The moderate party, on the contrary, is influenced by no motive, but the good of its country. Having not the film of intereſt before its eyes, it is capable of forming an impartial judgment: and, after exerciſing that capability,

lity, is of opinion, that a temperate reform in every department of the ſtate will tend to avert that calamity, ſo much dreaded by them both; that it will tend to check, if not totally deſtroy, the deleterious poiſon, diſſeminated with ſo much induſtry by republicans and levellers, the common enemy of both; and who endeavour by their talents and activity to ſupply their want of number. Such was the opinion alſo of the late Earl of Chatham, to whom the public has been accuſtomed to look with ſo much deference. Such was the opinion alſo of his Son, and of the Duke of Richmond, before one was appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the other Maſter General of the Ordinance.

Such changes of opinion, fluctuating as men are in, or out of place, certainly do not tend to create confidence in Adminiſtration, or to reconcile the people to its abuſes. They never ſaw ſo clearly the corrupt manner, in which the ſecret ſprings of Government are put into motion, and the abſolute neceſſity of a general reform. With what propriety, with what conſiſtency, can the Houſe of Commons be called a repreſentation of the people, when we all know, that not one tenth part of the people are repreſented

ſented at all, but by the figure ſynecdoche, putting a part for the whole? Affirmed it has been, and repeatedly affirmed in both houſes, that Peers have interfered at elections; that Peers have aſſumed the right of nominating members. Had there been no foundation for ſuch an aſſertion, one would ſuppoſe, that the two houſes would not ſilently have heard it affirmed in their very faces. And if there is truth in it, to what a ridiculous farce and mockery is the right of repreſentation reduced?

The neceſſity of a Parliamentary reform, therefore, as well as a reform in the Civil offices of Government, cannot by diſintereſted people be denied. The only difference of opinion exiſting between them, is, as to the moſt proper time and mode of effecting it. My reaſons I have already aſſigned for thinking a time of war, and of ſuch a war as the preſent, and at a juncture ſo critical, a very unfit moment for bringing the ſubject under legiſlative diſcuſſion. The man, who has the good of his country at heart, would not deſire, from party or intereſted motives, to embarraſs Miniſters, and retard the buſineſs of the ſtate, by promoting a meaſure, which he muſt be conſcious, will

tend to create difference of opinion and diſcord among the people.

Quietly and calmly, therefore, let us wait, until the ſword of war be ſheathed, and the hand of peace ſhall wave her olive branch; until the wiſdom of the legiſlature ſhall be able to apply that ſerious and cloſe attention to the ſubject, which its importance juſtly deſerves. Some definitive aſſurance, however, on the part of Miniſtry, of future ſupport to the meaſure, on the return of peace, would be very acceptable to the people. It would contribute to allay, in ſome degree, the prevailing ſpirit of diſcontent, and would induce them to ſubmit, with patient reſignation, to the heavy burdens impoſed on them, cheared by the beams of hope.

With reſpect to the Houſe of Lords, I ſhall only obſerve, that well-pleaſed would every patriot feel, to ſee the peerage made the reward of eminent ſervices to the nation, not uſed as a political engine to manage public buſineſs.

After a Parliamentary reform, and a correction of abuſes in the Civil offices of Government, the next grand department which ſtrikes our view as meriting a reform, is our Eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment; both on account of the notorious

torious abuſes exiſting therein, and on account of its great importance in the ſtate. So cloſe and intimate indeed, is the connection between our preſent Civil and Eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhments, both as reviſed, improved, and confirmed at different periods of our hiſtory, that no conſiderable change can be effected in one, without ſapping the foundation of the other.

With reſpect to the abuſes in this department, much is it to be lamented, that whilſt it poſſeſſes ſuch abundant revenues, more than ſufficient, if duly apportioned, to ſupply all its miniſters with the comforts of life, our eyes ſhould behold in every part of the kingdom, between Clergymen of equal learning, equal ability, and equal character, ſuch great diſparity in their annual income. On whatever ſide we direct our view, we ſee ſome enjoying all the ſuperfluities and luxuries which an exceſſive revenue affords; whilſt others, many of whom are more meritorious, with the utmoſt induſtry, and the moſt rigid frugality, can hardly obtain the common neceſſaries of life.

This wide difference in the condition of the eſtabliſhed Clergy, for the comfortable maintenance of whom ample proviſion is made by the

ſtate, ſtrikes the mind of every beholder. A more equal diſtribution of Church Livings, it is univerſally admitted by all diſintereſted people, is now become neceſſary. Why, it has been aſked, and juſtly aſked, ſhould one man, and that man perhaps a bachelor, with no ſuperior pretenſions, receive the emoluments of two, three, four, five, or more different benefices, to the annual amount of ſix, ſeven, eight, nine hundred, or one thouſand pounds, or perhaps more, whilſt the income of another, who is probably a more deſerving and a married man incumbered with a numerous family, does not exceed fifty? No anſwer is given to this queſtion, but that it is an abuſe, and deſerves correction. But how is this abuſe to be corrected? By the interference of the legiſlature. The legiſlature has lately meliorated the condition of the inferior clergy, by veſting in the biſhops a diſcretionary power to increaſe their annual ſtipend. It is true, an act of parliament has lately paſſed, delegating to the biſhops ſuch a power as that mentioned, upon an application for the exerciſe of it. But has the intention of the legiſlature, in reſpect to this augmentation, been fulfilled by their Lordſhips in any ſingle inſtance? Does not the act of Parliament lie, at this

this moment, in a dormant ſtate, neglected, and even already hardly known? Will it be diſcreet in the inferior Clergy, individually to petition, each his Dioceſan, to order for him an increaſe of ſtipend? Will not ſuch conduct ſubject them to the odious appellation of the diſcontented and troubleſome? Will it not alſo expoſe them to the danger of being diſmiſſed from their curacies? Will any other of the beneficed Clergy be deſirous of employing them, after their character is thus ſtamped with ignominy? The natural conſequence flowing from ſuch an exerciſe of their juſt right, would be their reduction to the loweſt ſtate of indigence.

It grieves me much to obſerve the great illiberality, which is every where viſible in the allowance of the beneficed Clergy to their Curates. The inferior Clergy are men, the greateſt part, or the whole of whoſe patrimony has been expended in their education, to qualify them for that ſtation, which they were deſigned to occupy in ſociety. The amount of their profeſſional income, therefore, forms the whole, or nearly the whole of their ſupport. And with this ſum, ſmall as it is, ſeldom exceeding forty or fifty pounds per annum in the aggregate, are

theſe uſeful and worthy men ordained to preſerve the character of Gentlemen, and to fulfil as Clergymen the leading duties of charity and beneficence. The condition of the loweſt mechanic, I will maintain, is ſuperior. The poverty of Curates is become proverbial.

Arrived within the ſacred threſhold of the prieſthood, they are prevented by expreſs acts of parliament from purſuing, were they ſo diſpoſed, any branch of trade. It has therefore been ſaid, that they may augment the ſmallneſs of their income, by opening private ſchools for education. This, I am confident, many of them would be glad to do. But are there not public ſchools of great eſtabliſhed credit, to which people are more deſirous of ſending their children, on account of its greater advantages? And are there not a number of private ſeminaries in every large town in the kingdom? And do not the Clergy, whenever an opportunity preſents itſelf, in embracing which there is the ſmalleſt chance of ſucceſs, endeavour to improve their condition by purſuing the recommendation propoſed? Surely it can never be meant, that they ſhould employ their time and talents in trudging through the alphabet with all the village children,

children, at the rate of twopence per week each, in which they may chance to reſide. If ſuch be the nature of the relief ſuggeſted, how much the feelings of their liberal minds will be wounded by ſuch conduct, it is left for the liberal mind to conceive.

This ſmallneſs of allowance I conſider to be one great cauſe of the low ſtation, which moſt of the Clergy hold in the public mind, and of the mean and degrading actions, of which the neceſſities of many prompt them to be guilty. But to whom is blame imputable? Ill would it become me to beſtow the ſmalleſt cenſure on the reverend bench of Prelates. But is it not publicly known, that to them is committed a diſcretionary power to redreſs the grievances, and meliorate the condition of Curates? And their neglecting to do ſo, ſeems to prove what has been ſtrongly affirmed, that their Lordſhips are afraid, their interference will offend the body of beneficed Clergy. But are not Biſhops the legal fathers, patrons, guardians, and protectors of their poor brethren? Surpriſed am I, greatly ſurpriſed, not to hear, that my Lord of Durham, that great diſciplinarian, that worthy and exemplary Prelate, who never diſcovered merit without

rewarding it, has afforded to the lower clergy a leading inſtance of benevolence. From his minute attention to whatever relates to the welfare of the Church, I long ſince expected, that, in the dioceſe of Durham, he would have made a perſonal enquiry into the ſtate of the Clergy, have conſcientiouſly mediated between Incumbents and Curates, and obliged the former, whoſe livings would admit of it, to allow the latter, agreeably to the intention of Parliament, a more liberal ſtipend.

It will not, I hope, be deemed preſumption, if I entreat the Reverend bench ſeriouſly to conſider, and effectually to improve the condition of the inferior Clergy, at this critical juncture, when the neceſſaries of life are advanced to ſuch a conſiderable price, when taxes are ſo numerous, and ſo oppreſſive, and when ſtill more are daily and hourly impoſed. If they feel a deſire to ſupport the dignity of their profeſſion, and maintain their conſequence in the ſtate, the beneficed Clergy will, of themſelves, without incurring the neceſſity of Epiſcopal interference, from a ſenſe of intereſt as well as of duty, grant to Curates a more liberal allowance. They certainly are a very numerous,

ous, and collectively, may perhaps be conſidered, in regard to parochial influence in the country, in ſome degree powerful, as well as a very uſeful body of men. I would not wiſh, therefore, to ſee their affections alienated from our eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment, or the ſpirit of diſcontent among them longer to prevail. Grant them the comforts; they deſire not the luxuries of life.

Should the biſhops, however, not think proper, unleſs perſonally called upon, to interfere by virtue of the late act, I ſubmit to the conſideration of the inferior Clergy, whether it would not be prudent to aſſemble by public advertiſement in the central town of each dioceſe, in order to petition in a body their reſpective Prelates. A meeting of this kind was advertiſed about eight months ago, to be holden at Andover, in the dioceſe of Wincheſter, for a ſimilar purpoſe. But what was propoſed, or executed at that meeting, I have never learnt. I am inclined to think, that nothing was determined; the curates, moſt probably, being afraid either to aſſemble, or if aſſembled, to ſpeak their ſentiments freely, through fear of giving offence to Incumbents.

What

What I have ſaid on the neceſſity of improving the condition of the inferior Clergy, will not, even if fully executed, amount to that meaſure of reform, which I deem expedient, and not at all hazardous to be adopted in their favour at the preſent eventful moment. I would wiſh to ſee a *complete* abolition of Pluralities; a law eſtabliſhed, that no clergyman below the dignity of Dean, ſhall hold more than one benefice, exceeding the annual value of 250*l.* or 300*l.*; and that no church preferment ſhall, either directly or indirectly, in regard to immediate or future preſentation, be bought or ſold for money, or the equivalent of money. Much abuſe prevails, at preſent, as to both theſe points; abuſe, any inſtance of which it is needleſs to particulariſe, as the fact is notorious to the whole kingdom.

The legal allowance of Pluralities is the grand, the neceſſary, and obvious cauſe of poverty among the inferior Clergy, and requires an immediate reform. The various benefices, often enjoyed by one man,* would, divided as

* We have an inſtance of a Clergyman in the Cloſe of Saliſbury, who (though a bachelor) holds no leſs than *ten or more* different eccleſiaſtical offices.

they

they ought to be, beſtow comfort and happineſs upon ſix or eight worthy families, at preſent with difficulty obtaining the common neceſſaries of life. The ſituation of ſome, indeed, is ſo deplorable, that I can with ſafety affirm, there are preſent in every dioceſe, at the viſitation dinner, triennially given by the Biſhops, many Clergymen, who would be glad to exchange ſituations with the ſervants who wait on them.*

The neceſſity of a reform, then, in this department cannot be denied. Nor do I conceive, that it will prove at all dangerous to the ſafety of the ſtate, or embarraſſing to the meaſures of Government, to enter upon the ſubject immediately. The nature of the reform, the abuſe itſelf points out. And in order to commit no

* It much concerned me lately to read in the public papers, that a clergyman † in the north of Devon had been reduced to ſuch poverty and diſtreſs, as to find it neceſſary to ſolicit the charitable contributions of his neighbours, in behalf of his wife and family. And to the great credit of the Biſhop of Exeter, be it mentioned, that, as ſoon as it arrived to the knowledge of his lordſhip, having been ſatisfied in his inquiries into the truth of his diſtreſs and the goodneſs of his moral character, he preſented him to the vicarage of Coleridge, near Chumleigh.

† Reverend John Ridd.

injuſtice

injuſtice to individuals, let thoſe who are now in poſſeſſion of Pluralities, or the purchaſed right of future preſentations, be allowed the exerciſe of their right, and liberty of enjoying their Pluralities for their lives. So that the reform ſhould operate only in regard to future preſentations.

Much praiſe would attach to the Biſhops, were they to reform the entrance into the Miniſtry: were they to obſerve greater circumſpection, in admitting proper perſons into the ſacred office; better qualified with reſpect to their moral character, as well as their literary and theological knowledge. On their lordſhips, I know, that much impoſition is at preſent practiſed by the beneficed Clergy, who grant the requiſite teſtimonials from a principle of friendſhip, often from ſlight acquaintance only with candidates, rather than from ſenſe of duty. They accuſtom themſelves to think, that a toſtimonial is required only *pro formâ*, and not deſigned, as it undoubtedly is, as a check upon the admiſſion of improper perſons.

But notwithſtanding all which has been advanced by many writers on the neceſſity of a reform in our Political and Eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhments,

bliſhments, there yet remains one department which merits a reform, more than any which has been mentioned, namely, the department of *religion* and *morality*.

The relaxed ſtate of religion and morality among mankind, is the ſubject of ſerious concern to every reflecting mind. We can, all of us, declaim very fluently on the neceſſity of a Political reform, without conſidering, at the ſame time, on the univerſal profligacy and univerſal diſſipation which prevails in every rank and ſtation of life. It is not ſimply confined to the lower orders of the people. Thoſe, who figure in the upper walks of life, and from whoſe ſuperior education we reaſonably expect better things, are leading characters in depravity. The want of connubial faith, in what is called faſhionable circles, checked as it is by the laudable exertions of a great and worthy magiſtrate,* has long ſince filled our courts of juſtice with buſineſs, and our lawyers with bread. Gaming-houſes and play-houſes are attended, are crowded with our Nobility and Gentry, whilſt the houſe of Prayer is almoſt deſerted. Hu-

* Lord Kenyon.

man

man ingenuity is daily tortured to diſcover ſome additional luxury, ſome additional gratification for the lovers of pleaſure; whilſt the luxury of doing good, and the gratification of a conſcious and upright mind are left to the quiet enjoyment of the very few, who are lovers of God. Uncontradicted, I conceive, will reſt the obſervation, that during the courſe of the laſt forty or fifty years, that is, ſince the time when Voltaire completely formed that well-known combination againſt religion, (for his hoſtility, I conſider, not confined in its conſequences to the doctrines of Chriſtianity) there has been a ſlow, but gradual relaxation among mankind in all their religious and moral duties. The various gradations in ſociety have been always ſo accuſtomed to imitate their ſuperiors in life, that it is not at all matter of ſurpriſe, that this relaxation ſhould become general. It is not at all matter of ſurpriſe, that profligacy, debauchery, and every ſpecies of wickedneſs ſhould prevail, when doctrines of ſuch tendency are propagated, almoſt ſyſtematically; when books and pamphlets, the moſt looſe, immoral, and blaſphemous are compoſed, and not only compoſed, but publiſhed, and the publication avowed; of which

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we have had a recent inſtance, not by a man compelled to it for ſubſiſtence; not by a man drawn from the ignorant and licentious croud in common life; but by a man who has been deemed worthy to be elected "guardian of our laws," and protector of our morals; by a man, who tells us, that he ſits at this moment in the Commons Houſe of Parliament, in the capacity of member.*

One

* "But there is one publication of the time, too peculiar and too important to be paſſed over in a general reprehenſion. There is nothing with which it may be compared. A legiſlator in our own parliament, a member of the Houſe of Commons of Great Britain, an elected guardian and defender of the laws, the religion and the good manners of the country, has neither ſcrupled nor bluſhed to depict, and to publiſh to the world the arts of lewd and ſyſtematic ſeduction, and to thruſt upon the nation the moſt open and unqualified blaſphemy againſt the very code and volume of our religion. And all this with his name, ſtyle, and title, prefixed to the novel or romance, called 'The Monk.' Nay, one of our public theatres has allured the public attention ſtill more to this novel, by a ſcenic repreſentation of an epiſode in it, not wholly unintereſting. 'O *proceres, cenſore opus eſt, an haruſpice nobis?* † I conſider this as a new ſpecies of legiſlative or ſtate parricide. What is it to the kingdom at large, or what is it to all thoſe whoſe office it is to maintain truth, and to inſtruct the riſing abilities and hope of

† Juv. Sat. 2.

England,

One aſſignable cauſe of the profligacy which prevails in upper life, is the almoſt conſtant reſidence of men of fortune in the metropolis. Their old family manſion is deſerted, and perhaps fallen into ruins. The old hoſpitality, for which this country was once ſo celebrated, is now loſt and gone. The influence of the Nobility and Gentry over their tenantry and inferior neighbours is greatly decayed. And the reaſon of all this decay, loſs, and deſertion, is the attachment which they feel to the diſſipation of town. For ſimilar conduct, and for ſimilar attachment,

England, that the author of it is *a very young man?* That, forſooth, he is a man of genius and fancy! So much the worſe. That there are very poetical deſcriptions of caſtles and abbies in this novel! So much the worſe again. The novel is *more alluring* on that account. Is this a time to poiſon the waters of our land in their ſprings and fountains? Are we to add incitement to incitement, and corruption to corruption, till there neither is, nor can be a return to virtuous action, and to regulated life? Who knows *the age* of this author? I preſume, very few. *Who does not know,* that he is a member of parliament? He has told us all ſo himſelf. I pretend not to know, whether this be an object of parliamentary animadverſion. Prudence may poſſibly forbid it. But we can feel, that it is an object of moral and of national reprehenſion, when a ſenator tranſgreſſes, and violates his firſt duty to his country."

Purſuits of Literature.

France

France has ſuffered moſt wofully. The loſs of this influence, we are aſſured by Mr. Neckar,* contributed greatly to the downfal of the French monarchy, and is attributed by him to the ſame cauſe.

Let men of property in England take warning by her mournful example. Let them conſider, that by frequent reſidence upon their eſtates in their country manſion, and keeping up the old cuſtoms of Engliſh hoſpitality; by ſtrictly attending to the diſcharge of all their religious and moral duties; by relieving the diſtreſſes, and contributing to the comforts of the neighbouring poor, they will not only receive the conſcious and laudable gratification of "doing good," but will alſo gain ſuch important aſcendancy over their minds, as may, in caſe of a national convulſion, which one and all ought to deprecate, prove of the moſt eſſential ſervice to the ſtate. In the Metropolis, there exiſt ſo many temptations to ſcenes of vice and diſſipation, that, when the Maſter of a family once reſigns himſelf to their force, and becomes depraved, is it at all ſtrange, that

* "On the French Revolution."

his domeſtic ſervants ſhould imitate his example, and that on their ſhort, but occaſional viſits in the country, they ſhould ſpread the diſeaſe of vice in all its various features, and in every poſſible direction; and ſhould thus corrupt the morality of the whole Kingdom?

Such conduct as this calls moſt loudly for a Reform; and if its voice be not ſoon heard, and obeyed, I much fear, that the religious and moral duties of Chriſtianity will ſoon approach their diſſolution. To puniſh the ſins of the nation, the hand of the Almighty is already uplifted againſt us in the proſecution of the war: and though we have not as yet, like the French, abſolutely denied the exiſtence of God, yet we have virtually called in queſtion his attributes, by refuſing obedience to his Laws. It becometh us well to conſider, with what propriety we can implore the interpoſition and aid of that Being, whom we daily and hourly inſult by our ſinful conduct. It becometh us well to conſider, that, by the omiſſion of religious and moral duties, many nations of old time have periſhed, and that it lies in the power of the Almighty to make this nation an addition to the number: that it lies in the power

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of the Almighty to diſcomfit the moſt powerful armies, and annihilate the moſt formidable fleets; and that there is no dependance on human ſtrength.——Let us, therefore, one and all, in every rank and ſtation of life, high and low, rich and poor, renovate the principles of our hearts, that we periſh not. Let us individually exclaim in the language of Job, "Where I have done iniquity, I will do ſo no more. Till I die, I will not remove my integrity from me. All, which the Lord hath commanded me, will I do."

By purſuing ſuch a line of conduct, we may reaſonably hope, that the divine favour and protection will be extended once more to the inhabitants of this Iſland. We may reaſonably hope, that providential interpoſition will anſwer our prayers, will baffle all the malicious efforts of our enemy, and turn the violence of his wrath back upon himſelf. For much is it to be lamented, that he has diſplayed in every poſſible inſtance, throughout the war, the moſt implacable animoſity againſt the people of this land. At no long time after its commencement, a decree was propoſed, applauded, and ratified by the Convention, to put to the ſword

every Engliſhman, whom the chances of war ſhould throw into their hands. Whether the French army were arrived at that ſtage of ſavage barbarity to execute the letter of this moſt horrid decree, ſignifies but little to my preſent purpoſe. It is enough, that it was propoſed, eſtabliſhed, and applauded, to prove the malignant ſpirit, by which they were actuated. The French have told us, indeed, in order to deceive the unwary, that they proſecute the war, not againſt the people of this country, but againſt its government only; that the people, whom they truly proclaim to be generous and hoſpitable, they are deſirous of liberating from the ſhackles of tyranny and oppreſſion; to them they are ready to give the hand of friendſhip, and all the pretended advantages of that form of government, which they think proper to dignify by the epithets, Equal and Free. But unfortunately for them, this bloody decree bears witneſs to their falſehood.——My Countrymen! let us not believe their pompous words and benevolent declarations. They have "language without meaning, phraſes to blind the people, and ideas to delude. But when the ſcheme is accompliſhed, *and when they obtain the power*, their language

language is perfectly intelligible." * The poiſon of aſps is under their lips. Simulation, fraud, and treachery have ever been prominent features in the Gallic character.† They will approach us with the ſmooth words and ſmiling countenances of friends; but "when the ſcheme is accompliſhed, and *when they obtain the power*," they will ſcruple not, aſſaſſins like, to run daggers to our hearts. They have drained to the very dregs all their ſtock of ſubtilty and artifice to induce the people of this Country to withdraw their confidence in Government, and to imagine, that they ſuffer the cruelties of tyranny and the miſery of oppreſſion. But who ought to be the moſt competent judges? We can form a pretty accurate opinion of their benevolent intentions from their conduct towards

* Purſuits of Literature.

† "I would obſerve with great earneſtneſs and affection to my Country, that in all departments of ſociety, government, religion, or literature, the French have all times maintained *one unvarying ſyſtem of deception*, when under the ancient monarchy, or under the iron tyranny of their new republic. Their manner of reaſoning is, and always has been ſophiſtical. We are in perpetual danger of being miſled by the appearance of reaſon. We have always ground for diſtruſt."

Purſuits of Literature.

thoſe Nations, over which force or treachery has given them an aſcendant power. "We have all ſeen and felt, *what* the revolutionary principle *is*. We know, *what* freedom, *what equality of power among the citizens*, what fraternity, what comfort, what happineſs, and what ſecurity France has offered and *given* to all countries, who have either bowed voluntarily, or have been ſubjected to her tyranny. Take Cicero's expreſſions. As to themſelves; *Licet, quod videtur, publicum judicare; quod judicaverint, vendere.* As to other nations, friend or foe; *Perſpici non poteſt, utrum ſeveritas acerbior, an benignitas quæſtuoſior ſit.*"* We are ſituated too near Holland not to know, in what manner ſhe has treated the deluded people of that Country. For maintaining her armies, and defraying a great part of the expences incurred by

* "Such are the words in that elaborate and conſummate oration, *on the Agrarian Law*, which every man would do well to read and conſider, in the original or in a tranſlation. It is peculiarly pertinent to the preſent time. For my own part, I would remind my Countrymen, in this perilous and preſſing hour, of the eloquent words of Demonax, as they are recorded by Lucian; *Conſtitutions and doctrines like theſe, you never will decree, till you have firſt removed or overthrown* THE ALTAR OF MERCY."

Purſuits of Literature.

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the proſecution of the war, ſhe has impoſed the moſt ſevere contributions, and levied them in a manner the moſt tyrannical, to which no people, who have but the ſhade of freedom, would daſtardly ſubmit. But, having received the fraternal embrace, and being under the threatening aſpect of a powerful army, what could the Dutch do, defenceleſs, ſtripped, plundered, having ſwords brandiſhed over their heads, and bayonets pointed at their breaſts? Their internal trade is now ſtagnant: their foreign commerce annihilated: and their independence, once the glory of this people, and in their aſſertion and defence of which ſo much human blood has been ſhed, is now totally gone.

But the pride and ambition of France reſt not here. She has lately preſumed to diſpoſe of one Nation,* by transferring it, as a ſpecies of property, under the imperial juriſdiction of another;† and has endeavoured, by menaces and intrigues, to ſubvert the Government of a third,‡ which has ſhewn her acts of friendſhip, rather than of hoſtility, and has ever been celebrated for its independent ſpirit. Theſe

* Venice. † Auſtria. ‡ Switzerland.

things were not done in a corner, but are notorious to the whole world; and were executed at the moment, when ſhe profeſſed the greateſt regard for their welfare. She carries the emblems of fraternity and good-will in one hand, and in the other, devaſtation and the ſword.

Such is the line of conduct, which the ſons of France purſue towards the inhabitants of the conquered countries, nay even of thoſe countries, with which they conſider themſelves in alliance! And ſuch is the mode of treatment, which we, my Countrymen! may reaſonably expect to receive, ſhould they unfortunately, by any perfidy or miſconduct on our part, be able to eſtabliſh themſelves in this iſland!

If we now direct our attention, for a moment, towards their government, we ſhall find, I fear, but little to extol, either in the leading objects of their legiſlature, or in their individual conduct one towards another. That ſyſtem of Equality, once the fallacious boaſt of their Country, and by which they certainly meant, at its firſt promulgation, an equalization of property, upon the principles of which, having practically found themſelves unable to act, they have now thought

thought proper to abandon, as inſupportable; quibbling the ſenſe into an equality of rights. For a time, it undoubtedly operated agreeably to their moſt ſanguine wiſhes. It proved an effectual inducement with the unthinking part of mankind to aſſert their principles of Government, and to become proſelytes to their cauſe; fooliſhly thinking, that by theſe means they ſhould become richer and happier.

With reſpect to Liberty, which was another bait thrown out to ſeduce the unwary, let us inquire into matter of fact, as it ſtands upon record, and aſk, what is the real nature of that liberty, which the French nation has enjoyed almoſt from the commencement of the Revolution to the preſent period? Freedom of ſpeech, the Liberty of the preſs, and Trial by jury, leading objects in the conſideration of the National Aſſembly on its organization after the fall of Deſpotiſm, and which are now, and have always been conſidered, as the Grand Palladium of Britiſh freedom, and by profeſſing to eſtabliſh which after the Engliſh model, they paid that part of our conſtitution the tribute of applauſe ſo juſtly its due, have been violated and refuſed in ſeveral recent inſtances, known to all man-

mankind. Some of their moſt diſtinguiſhed men, men, who have acted very conſpicuous parts in the oppoſite departments of Peace* and War,† were, not long ſince, tranſported to diſtant and inhoſpitable regions for *alleged* crimes only, without even the mockery of a trial. Under what point of view can ſuch proceedings be conſidered by mankind, but that of Deſpotiſm the moſt oppreſſive and inexorable? And yet, my Countrymen! this is the full amount of that liberty, which has been extolled in the glowing language of high panegyric! But may this, their darling Liberty‡ which they dare to recommend for our acceptance, never reach the Britiſh ſhores! May the people of England poſſeſs too much good ſenſe, to exchange the ſubſtance for the ſhadow! Contented with our preſent form of Government, admirably adapted as it is, to give ſucceſs to exertion, and ſecurity to property,§ formed for

* Barthelemy. † Pichegru, &c. &c.

‡ Vide note, page 58.

§ "We have every thing to loſe. We have, under our own form of government, comfort, protection, honour, ſecurity, and happi-

for the wellbeing alike of the poor and of the rich, whoſe laws are equal, and thoſe laws framed on the principles of Juſtice and Moderation, with a gradation of ranks in Society, cloſely connected by a chain of mutual dependence, the poorer part of whoſe members, when worn out by infirmities, or advanced to a ſtate of decrepitude, are ſupplied with all the neceſſaries of life; in which caſes of oppreſſion are ſeldom heard, or heard only to be redreſſed; with a conſtitution, thus happily conſtructed, which has ſtood the teſt of ages, univerſally admired, and, until lately, admired, even by the very people, who have innovated upon all the ſettled eſtabliſhments of the world, let us thank the Almighty, that he hath enabled us to preſerve to the preſent day all its leading advantages; that he hath enabled us to oppoſe, hitherto ſucceſsfully, the malicious deſigns of our enemies abroad, and to check the activity of Sedition at home; at a time, when the evil Spirit of Li-

happineſs. The price of preſerving them is very great; but the price of anarchy, and *inextricable* confuſion, would be greater beyond all calculation."

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centiouſneſs and Innovation has ſtalked abroad, has overthrown, or diſorganized nearly all the Government of Europe; at a time, when the bonds of good order in ſociety are looſened, civilization as it were barbariſed, and neighbouring nations thrown back to a ſtate almoſt of primæval darkneſs. It is our intereſt, our greateſt intereſt, on which indeed depends our exiſtence as an independent nation, to become united among ourſelves. By employing the means of defence, which Nature has given us, and our Government has provided, with unanimity and firmneſs, we may brave the threatened attacks of all our external foes. Vain and ineffectual will prove all their efforts to ſubjugate the *united* people of this land; united, as people ought to be, who have the good of their country at heart, and who feel it their intereſt, as well as their duty to oppoſe the proud invader.

This propoſition is ſo true in its principle, as to be admitted even by the French themſelves. Their hopes of ſucceſs are not founded altogether on their own numbers, or on their ſkill in the art of war, but on the "Millions," as they ſay,

of

of Engliſhmen, whom they affect to believe capable of flocking to their ſtandard, and plunging their ſwords into the boſom of their country; that country, which poſſeſſes the greateſt claim on their attachment and their gratitude; that country, which gave them birth, and held forth its foſtering hand for their ſupport and protection at an age, when they were incapable of ſupporting and protecting themſelves; that dear Country, wherein dwell all their tender connections, their wives, their children, their fathers, their brethren; all of whom would feel and ſuffer moſt wofully from the traiterous wound.

It is a truth, which indeed cannot be lamented in language too pathetic, that they have already ſo far ſucceeded in their hoſtile attempts, as to throw the apple of Diſcord amongſt us. The torch of Sedition has appeared. Inflammatory ſpeeches have been delivered by the Diſcontented and Ambitious of our own people; by thoſe perturbed Spirits, who can never be at reſt, and who would wiſh to raiſe themſelves to an elevated point of diſtinction, even upon their Country's ruin. To theſe cauſes principally

pally may be aſcribed the prolongation of the war. To theſe cauſes principally may be attributed the enemy's hopes of ſucceſs. That inveterate ſpirit of animoſity, which never lied dormant any long period, ſince we became an independent nation, but over which, with the view of facilitating the execution of their evil deſigns, they for ſome time caſt a deceptive but thin veil, ſo far ſucceeding as to throw a voluntary blindneſs over the eyes of ſome of our popular politicians, and to miſlead ſome well-diſpoſed, but incautious people, who are not accuſtomed to behold things with attention, to judge of actions by continuity, and to develop the various artifices practiſed by mankind, that inveterate ſpirit of animoſity has been publicly avowed in the proclamation, publiſhed not long ago by the French Directory, and in all their declarations and proceedings, ſince made known. They now boldly throw off the maſk. They now openly threaten to plant their tricoloured Standard upon the banks of the Thames, to remove the ſeat of war, and the whole train of its attendant evils, to our own ſhores, and to *dictate*, as to *ſlaves*, terms of peace. What was the general feeling of the Engliſh nation upon reading

reading this proclamation? What, but indignation againſt the authors of it! The ſpirit of the Britiſh people has never been ſo inſulted, ſince they firſt aſſerted their claim to independence: never, no never! What would be the language of our brave anceſtors, the Edwards and Henries of old time, before whoſe victorious arms the French nation has ſo often bent its ſuppliant knees, were it in their power to reviſit their native land? What would be their language, but that, which the moſt indignant emotions could excite? And ſhall we, the deſcendants of thoſe very men, who have ſo often ſhaken France to the very centre, ſhall we ſo far forget our origin and our power, as daſtardly to ſubmit to have terms of Peace *dictated* to us by an ambitious and inveterate foe; a foe, whoſe avowed object it is, to annihilate us, as a nation? Such language is fit to be applied only to the inhabitants of a conquered country, or to ſlaves, not to Engliſhmen, whoſe privilege and whoſe birthright are freedom and independence.

Much is it to be lamented, that ſuch a ſpirit of animoſity ſhould fill the boſom of our enemy,

and

and that he cannot be prevailed upon to convert his "ſwords into ploughſhares, and his ſpears into pruning hooks." Every honourable advance, conducted in a manner, beſpeaking the moſt ſincere intentions, has undoubtedly been made by the Government of this Country, to obtain for the people the deſirable bleſſing of Peace; which nothing, but the moſt inſatiable thirſt of ambition, or the moſt implacable hatred,* on the part of the enemy, could prompt him to reject. The Demon of War, he has declared, ſhall ſtill reign. The current of human blood, with which Europe has been too long deluged, ſhall ſtill flow. Strange is it to reflect, that mankind conſider not the natural calamities of human life to be ſufficiently numerous, but they muſt ruſh into unneceſſary conteſts to augment them! Strange is it to reflect, that, whilſt the hand of Death is daily cutting down, in the natural courſe of morta-

* "We muſt remember, that all the leagues of French Factions and their leaders, know not to relent. There is as much mercy in them, to uſe the phraſe of Shakeſpeare, *as there is milk in a male tiger.*"

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lity,

lity, thouſands of the human race, we muſt ſeek to increaſe the number by the muſket and the ſword.

But ſince every endeavour has been exerted without effect by thoſe, who hold the reins of Government over this Kingdom, to obtain a general peace for Europe, let us, on our part, be ſuſpicious of thoſe doctrines, and watchful of thoſe perſons, diſperſed amongſt us by the enemy, which attempt to draw a line of diſtinction between the Government and the People, and to alienate their attachment to the eſtabliſhment of their forefathers. We cannot be too vigilant, too active, or too circumſpect, at a juncture ſo momentous, when we are threatened with a moſt formidable invaſion by a proud and haughty adverſary, who endeavours to revive between the inhabitants of the two Countries the moſt implacable animoſity of ancient times. "*Delenda eſt Carthago*," is a ſentiment, which has been delivered, applauded, echoed, and re-echoed from one extremity of France to the other. But, my Countrymen! let us hold faſt together; and we need neither to deſpond, nor be diſmayed at her threats. "We may have good hope, for we have a good

cauſe."*—Let us *all*, then, come forward, heart and hand, at this hour of danger. Let us forget all private animoſities, the ſpirit of party, the oppoſition and ſtruggle of rivalry, and unite in defence of our Country. Let men of property come forward with pecuniary aid. Let men in the lower walks of life volunteer their perſonal ſervice. Never let it be ſaid, that Engliſhmen are ſlow and backward in defending their rights and liberties. Never let it be ſaid, that there exiſt not upon the ſhores of Albion, a Manlius, a Camillus, and a Curtius, men, ready to devote themſelves for their Country's welfare. Let the *Ardor Patriæ* burn in every breaſt, and be the ruling principle of our conduct. Remember, that the object of the war is totally changed: that we are not now contending for the poſſeſſion of a paltry Iſland in the Weſt Indies: that we are not now contending for the poſſeſſion of an inſignificant poſt in America. It is no trivial, or inconſiderable object at ſtake. It is no leſs an object, than the poſſeſſion of our liberties, the poſſeſſion of our rights, the poſſeſſion of our property, the poſſeſſion of every

* Purſuits of Literature.

thing,

thing, which is dear and valuable to Freemen. We are abſolutely and literally fighting "*pro aris et focis.*" If abuſes have inſenſibly crept into the different departments of Government, let us, at proper time, reform and correct them. Let us not, by our cabals and our diſunion,* encourage the enemy to invade and pillage our Country, and overthrow our Conſtitution. A better was never framed; none more calculated to promote individual comfort, and eſtabliſh national proſperity.——If our minds are deeply impreſſed with the truth of theſe things, let us all, with one accord, manfully ſtand up in its ſupport. To maintain our independence, and to protect our eſtabliſhments from the attacks

* "We have *ſtill* reſources; but the times never called with ſo loud and commanding a voice for wiſdom, diſcernment, and integrity, for temperate, and timely, and *gradual* conceſſion with dignity and ſecurity, and for an œconomy rigid and undeviating, on *the part of our Governors*; and for obedience, acquieſcence under temporary preſſure, alacrity in defence, and vigilance, and loyalty, and ſteadineſs, in *all the ſubjects of this land.* We have no need of the Roman *Armiluſtrium:* our arms are purified already. Our Soldiers are loyal, and honourable, and without ſpot. They have been weighed in the balance, and found perfect. And I truſt our naval flag will never again wave, but in defiance *to our enemies.* We are not loſt, if we continue firm."

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of a foreign foe, is characteriſtic of generoſity, of bravery, and of virtue. To fall in their defence, is to die honourably and glorioufly.* Such ſentiments have obtained in all ages of the world; and will Engliſhmen firſt deny the truth of them? Will Engliſhmen daſtardly ſubmit like the ſlaves of Barbarians, "in ſullen ſilence to tug the oar, and drag the chains of ſervitude?" Aſſuredly not. But whither is fled the military ardour of our Anceſtors, that we ſeem to require rouſing in the hour of danger. Not to defend our Country, is to deſert it. Not to be worthy of Liberty, is to be no longer worthy of life. Shall Great Britain ever become a Province to France? Shall her fine Navy, which has always been her pride and boaſt, be led, ſhorn of its honours, and diſmantled of all its glory, into the ports of France, and her ſons and daughters into bondage?—Forbid it, Heaven!—Bluſh, Britons, at the thought!—Never ſhall ſuch diſgrace and infamy attach to Old England, whilſt ſhe has a

* "*Dulce et decorum eſt pro patria mori.*" Hor. lib. 3. car. 2.

"*Pro patria quis bonus dubitet mortem oppetere, ſi ei ſit profuturus?*" Cic. 1. Offic. n. 57.

"*Pro patria mori præclarum eſt.*" Ad. Attic. lib. 8. epiſ. 2.

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ſon alive; never, no, never!——Let thoſe, who are able to maintain themſelves, ſerve their country without pay. To individuals, the additional expence will be inconſiderable; but in the preſent embarraſſed ſtate of our finances, the aggregate will fall heavy on the public. It becomes us well to remember, that at the preſent moment, no leſs than in the day of battle, our ſafety depends on individual exertion. By looking one on another, every man expecting of his neighbour voluntary offers of perſonal ſervice, and voluntary contributions, nothing is done: no offers are made; no contributions are raiſed. Had not Adminiſtration ſhewn more zeal and activity in defending the country, than has appeared on the part of the people, we ſhould at this moment, moſt probably have a French Army in the heart of the Kingdom. Never, I believe, were the inhabitants of this land ſo inſenſible of the danger, which ſurrounded them. Never did ſuch criminal ſlackneſs appear at an hour, pregnant with great events. The nation, like a ſluggiſh horſe, has ſhewn no inclination to advance one ſtep, without the conſtant application of the ſpur. Whence can ſuch criminal inactivity proceed?

Surely

Surely, we do not conſider the greatneſs of the danger. The declared object of the French is, to blot out our name from the independent nations of Europe. Their declared object is, to deſtroy our Arſenals, to occupy our Sea ports, to poſſeſs our Navy, and to pillage our Country. Are we willing to ſuffer theſe things? Are we willing to have our property, the ſaving fruits of our induſtry, forcibly taken from us, and perhaps ourſelves murdered, the chaſtity of our wives and daughters violated, and our corn and cattle ſeized for the maintenance of a foreign Army? The Diſcontented and Ambitious, who are deſirous of ſeeing all the horrors of anarchy and tumult, in hopes of fattening upon the ſpoil, and raiſing themſelves into greatneſs, will perhaps tell us, that theſe are hard times, and that our condition cannot be worſe under the Gallic yoke. It is admitted, that the times are hard, the truth of which every man muſt feel very ſenſibly; but bad as he may be led to fancy his condition, whenever the French ſecure a footing in this Iſland, it will doubtleſs be infinitely worſe, for the labouring poor, as well as for the rich and great.—It is the acknowledged frailty of our nature to be always

uneaſy

uneaſy and diſcontented with our preſent condition, nor are we truly ſenſible of the comforts we enjoy, until we have loſt them. None can ſo juſtly eſtimate the value of liberty, as the man, who has ſuffered bondage.

The enemy has told us, and will perhaps tell us again, that he is coming to bring us Liberty.* But what greater liberty can we enjoy, than we at preſent poſſeſs? True liberty conſiſts in the power of acting, every man juſt as his inclinations may prompt him, provided he injure no individual member of ſociety. And this liberty we enjoy in its full extent. Whatever is more than this, is Licentiouſneſs.

Let us not, therefore, be ſo fooliſh as to liſten to his fawning words, and fair promiſes. Every man knows, that the great outline of the French character is, as I have before obſerved, the moſt conſummate craft, ſimulation, and artifice. And be aſſured, that after he ſhall have

* "The French apply the terms, *Equality, Liberty, Fraternity*, &c. for Tyranny, Deſolation, Oppreſſion, and Plunder. This is well underſtood. It would be preſumption to enlarge on this ſubject to a kingdom ſo enlightened, ſo dignified, and ſo prepared as Great Britain."

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ſucceeded in diſuniting and diſarming us, he will laugh at our credulity in believing him, and reproach us for our cowardice.

The preſent moment is ſo pregnant with great events, and the unremitted attention of Miniſtry ſo neceſſary, to ward the impending dangers, that, however deſirous of a Parliamentary Reform, I by no means approve of this as a fit time, to bring forward ſo important a ſubject for Legiſlative deliberation: becauſe I am of opinion, that it will tend to diſtract the attention of Government, to embarraſs their meaſures, and to create popular diſſention, at a time, when there is the moſt urgent neceſſity for activity, vigour, and union.

I would not likewiſe preſs the neceſſity of an immediate Reform in our Eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment, were I not conſcious, that the comfortable ſubſiſtence of a numerous and uſeful body of men depends on our adopting ſuch a meaſure; and that conſequences, ſo doleful, will not flow from it: becauſe the neceſſity of a reform in this department is admitted even by thoſe, whoſe intereſt it is to continue the exiſting abuſes.

But a reformed line of conduct, in regard to the

the fulfilment of religious and moral duties, is indiſpenſable, by every man in this kingdom, from the higheſt to the loweſt. There was never, I believe, a period, when vices of every deſcription prevailed in ſociety ſo univerſally, and in ſuch various features. They are not confined ſolely to the higher, to the lower, or to the middle claſſes of mankind. In every rank and ſtation, in all the aſcending gradations of ſocial life, we behold the ſame ſpirit of ſelfiſhneſs, and avarice, and intemperance, and diſſipation, and gaming, and irreligion. Even in the days of the great Roman Satyriſt, making due allowance to the "*Poetica licentia*," I doubt, that the profligacy of mankind, repreſented as it is in his plain, ſtrong, and forcible language, exceeded that of the preſent age.* Little, very little public virtue remains; and that ſmall portion of it, which does ſometimes appear, with the novelty of a ſtranger, contaminated as

* "*Et quando uberior vitiorum copia? Quando*
Major avaritiæ patuit ſinus? Alea quando
Hos animos? Neque enim loculis comitantibus itur
Ad caſum tabulæ, poſita ſed luditur arca."
Omne in præcipiti vitium ſtetit."

Juv. Sat. 1.

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it muſt be by perpetual contact with the diſeaſed parts of ſociety, will, I fear, ſoon periſh. Our conſtitution is a fabric, which reſts for ſupport, as much on the pillar of Religion and Morality, as on the natural juſtice of its principles, and its practical advantages.

In defence of this Conſtitution, and in defence of our Country, let no conſideration damp our ardour, or relax our exertions. Let every ſubordinate concern yield to this one grand national object. Mindful only, that his Country is in danger, it is the duty of every man to come forward in its defence; and a duty, which the voice of Honour, the voice of Gratitude, and the voice of Intereſt, calls upon him to diſcharge.

Laſtly; ſhould the enemy, powerful as he is, be able to execute his inſolent threats of Invaſion, let us never, never forget the patriotic language of the late Earl of Chatham, delivered to this effect in the Houſe of Lords, on a memorable debate reſpecting the American War: Said his Lordſhip, "Were I an American, as I am an Engliſhman, and a foreign enemy ſhould dare to ſet his foot on the

the ſhores of my Country, I never would lay down my arms, until I had driven the preſumptuous invader from her coaſts—never—never—never!"

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